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means for maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet, the help information for assisting the user in providing personalized prompts associated with the communication management options;

means for receiving an option selection from the user via a network interface;

means for retrieving the respective help information associated with the selected option;

and

means for providing the respective help information to the user via the network interface.

REMARKS

Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested. Claims 1-21 are currently pending in this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to replace 'the communication management option' with --a communication management option--. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Matthews et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,602,129).

Matthews describes a Voice Message System (VMS), that is described at column 5 as follows:

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"... the VMS 10 of Fig. 1 includes the following subsystems: an administrative subsystem 60, call processor subsystems 62A-62C, and a data storage subsystem 64. There is only one administrative system 60 and data storage subsystem 64 for each VMS system 10, but there may be multiple call processor subsystems 62A-62C..." (lines 20-27). "A message deposited from a caller is stored in the VMS system 10, and the message is later delivered to the addressee. Instructional messages are also stored in the data storage 64 to guide the user in using the VMS 10..." (lines 34-38)

Claim 1 is patentably distinct over Matthews, which neither describes nor suggest "...A method for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of ... maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options ... *receiving a selected access code from the user via a second interactive voice response service* different from the first interactive voice service ... recording the personalized prompt for a communication management option associated with the selected access code via the second interactive voice service; and ... *storing the recorded personalized prompt in a location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service...*"

Claims 1-5:

In order to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102, every limitation of the claims should be shown in the prior art. While the Examiner has made a diligent effort to identify to the Applicant the various locations in Matthews that he believe that the claimed limitations are taught, Applicants assert that several of the limitations are not shown or described.

For example, for the limitations of 'first interactive voice response service' and 'second interactive voice response service', the examiner states that Matthews "'voice response service provided to callers who want to access subscriber's mailbox or RO message address' reads on the claim 'first interactive voice response service'", and further states that "voice response service for mailbox subscriber' reads on the claim 'a second interactive voice response service'".

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First, it is unclear to the Applicant what the difference is between the elements identified as first and second voice response service by the Examiner are 'different', as recited in the claims. From an examination of the Matthews patent, it appears that there is only *one* VMS within the subsystem. (See, for example, column 5 where it is discussed that certain items in the system are redundant (data storage busses, for example), but there is no mention of redundancy of the VMS.

Second, Applicant's note that there are certain interrelationships claimed between the first and second voice interactive systems of claim 1. For example, Applicant's could find no description or suggestion of "... receiving a selected access code from the user *via a second interactive voice response service* different from the first interactive voice service ... recording the personalized prompt for a communication management option associated with the selected access code *via the second interactive voice service*; and ... storing the recorded personalized prompt in a location accessible *for presentation by the first interactive voice response service*..."

Accordingly, because several limitations of the claim are neither shown nor suggested in Matthews, Applicant submits that the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-5 serve to further limit claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons put forth with regard to claim 1.

Claims 6-9:

Applicant's independent claim 6 is also patentably distinct over Matthews, which neither describes nor suggests "...A method for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of ... maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options *on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet*, the help information for

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assisting the user in providing personalized prompts associated with the communication management options ... *receiving an option selection from the user via a network interface ...* retrieving the respective help information associated with the selected option; and *providing the respective help information to the user via the network interface...*"

There is no mention in Matthews of "... maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet ..." Rather, Matthews describes, at column 5, lines 37-38 "... Instructional messages are stored in the data storage 64 to guide the user in using the VMS..." Accordingly, claim 6 is patentably distinct over Matthews, and the rejection should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 7-9 server to further narrow claim 6 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons put forth with regard to claim 6.

Claim 10-14:

Independent claim 10 is patentably distinct over Matthews, which neither describes nor suggests "...An apparatus for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the apparatus comprising ... means for maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options ... means for receiving a selected access code from the user via a second interactive voice response service different from the first interactive voice service ... means for recording the personalized prompt for the communication management option associated with the selected access code via the second interactive voice service; and means for storing the recorded personalized prompt in a location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service..." Accordingly, for reasons similar to that put forth with regard to claim 1, claim 10 is patentably distinct over the references, and the

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rejection should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 11-14 depend on claim 10 and add further patentable limitations to claim 10 and are allowable for at least the reasons put forth with regard to claim 10.

Claims 15-18:

Claim 15 is patentably distinct over Matthews, which neither describes nor suggests "... An apparatus for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of ... means for maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet, the help information for assisting the user in providing personalized prompts associated with the communication management options ... means for receiving an option selection from the user via a network interface ... means for retrieving the respective help information associated with the selected option; and means for providing the respective help information to the user via the network interface..." Accordingly, for reasons similar to that put forth with regard to claim 6, claim 15 is patentably distinct over the references, and the rejection should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 16-18 depend on claim 15 and add further patentable limitations to claim 10 and are allowable for at least the reasons put forth with regard to claim 15.

Claims 19-21:

Claim 19 is patentably distinct over Matthews, which neither describes nor suggests "... An apparatus for configuring a communication system adapted to manage communications for a plurality of users, the communication system including a *first interactive voice response service* ... *a personalization server adapted to store the associated personalized prompts in the prompts*

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store, the personalization server including ... an options store adapted to store a list of the communication management options ... an access code store adapted to store access codes respectively associated with the communication management options ... *a second interactive voice response service adapted to record the personalized prompts* associated with the communication management options in response to the associated access codes..." Accordingly, for reasons similar to those put forth with regard to claim 1, claim 19 is patentably distinct over Matthews, and the rejection should be withdrawn. Claims 20 and 21 serve to further limit claim 19, and are thus allowable for at least the reasons put forth with regard to claim 19.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 5 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,602,129) in view of Ball et al (U.S. Patent No 5,394,445).

Ball describes (abstract) a device and process whereby a plurality of delivered calling number and associated announcement message pairs is automatically acquired and accumulated upon receipt of calls from unrecognized calling numbers.

127 Applicant's submit that the combination of Ball and Matthews neither describes nor suggests the limitations of claims 5 and 14, for at least the reason that Matthews, as described above, does not disclose basic limitations in their associated parent claims. Accordingly, for at least this reason, claims 5 and 14 are patentably distinct over the combination of references, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

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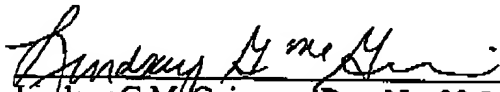
Conclusion

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Mary Steubing, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

2/5/2003
Date


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MARKED UP CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of:

maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options;

receiving a selected access code from the user via a second interactive voice response service different from the first interactive voice service;

recording the personalized prompt for a communication management option associated with the selected access code via the second interactive voice service; and

storing the recorded personalized prompt in a location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

maintaining help information describing the communication management options; and
providing the help information to the user via a network interface.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the method further comprising the steps of:

receiving a user identification from the user via the second interactive voice response service;

retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification;

comparing the selected access code against the retrieved list; and

controlling operation of the recording and storing steps in accordance with a validity result of the comparing step.

4. A method according to claim 2, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the method further comprising the steps of:

receiving a user identification from the user via the network interface; and

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retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification;

wherein the help information providing step is performed in accordance with the received user identification.

5. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

adjusting the communication management options presented by the first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user;

adjusting the maintained access codes respectively associated with the communication management options;

receiving an adjusted access code from the user via the second interactive voice response service;

recording the personalized prompt for the adjusted communication management option associated with the adjusted access code via the second interactive voice service; and

storing the recorded personalized prompt in an adjusted location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service.

6. (Amended) A method for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of:

A2 maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet, the help information for assisting the user in providing personalized prompts associated with the communication management options;

receiving an option selection from the user via a network interface;

retrieving the respective help information associated with the selected option; and

providing the respective help information to the user via the network interface.

7. A method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

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maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options, the access codes for allowing the user to record personalized prompts via a second interactive voice response service;

retrieving the respective access code associated with the selected option; and
providing the respective access code to the user via the network interface.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the second interactive voice response service is different from the first interactive voice response service.

9. A method according to claim 6, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the method further comprising the steps of:
receiving a user identification from the user via the network interface; and
retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification;

wherein the help information providing step is performed in accordance with the received user identification.

10. (Amended) An apparatus for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the apparatus comprising:

means for maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options;

means for receiving a selected access code from the user via a second interactive voice response service different from the first interactive voice service;

means for recording the personalized prompt for a communication management option associated with the selected access code via the second interactive voice service; and

means for storing the recorded personalized prompt in a location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service.

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11. An apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:
means for maintaining help information describing the communication management options; and
means for providing the help information to the user via a network interface.
12. An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the apparatus further comprising:
means for receiving a user identification from the user via the second interactive voice response service;
means for retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification;
means for comparing the selected access code against the retrieved list; and
means for controlling operation of the recording and storing means in accordance with a validity result of the comparing means.
13. An apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the apparatus further comprising:
means for receiving a user identification from the user via the network interface; and
means for retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification;
wherein the help information providing means is operative in accordance with the received user identification.
14. An apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:
means for adjusting the communication management options presented by the first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user;
means for adjusting the maintained access codes respectively associated with the communication management options;
means for receiving an adjusted access code from the user via the second interactive voice response service;

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means for recording the personalized prompt for the adjusted communication management option associated with the adjusted access code via the second interactive voice service; and

means for storing the recorded personalized prompt in an adjusted location accessible for presentation by the first interactive voice response service.

15. (Amended) An apparatus for allowing a user to provide personalized prompts associated with communication management options presented by a first interactive voice response service on behalf of the user, the method comprising the steps of:

A4 means for maintaining help information respectively associated with the communication management options on a device connected to the first interactive voice response service via the internet, the help information for assisting the user in providing personalized prompts associated with the communication management options;

means for receiving an option selection from the user via a network interface;

means for retrieving the respective help information associated with the selected option;

and

means for providing the respective help information to the user via the network interface.

16. An apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising:

means for maintaining access codes respectively associated with the communication management options, the access codes for allowing the user to record personalized prompts via a second interactive voice response service;

means for retrieving the respective access code associated with the selected option; and

means for providing the respective access code to the user via the network interface.

17. An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the second interactive voice response service is different from the first interactive voice response service.

18. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the communication management options are indexed by user, the apparatus further comprising:

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means for receiving a user identification from the user via the network interface; and
means for retrieving a list of available communication management options associated with the user in accordance with the received user identification,
wherein the help information providing means is operative in accordance with the received user identification.

19. An apparatus for configuring a communication system adapted to manage communications for a plurality of users, the communication system including a first interactive voice response service adapted to present communication management options to incoming callers on behalf of the plurality of users, the communication management options having associated personalized prompts that are stored in a prompts store coupled to the first interactive voice response service, the apparatus comprising:

a personalization server adapted to store the associated personalized prompts in the prompts store, the personalization server including
an options store adapted to store a list of the communication management options;
an access code store adapted to store access codes respectively associated with the communication management options;
a second interactive voice response service adapted to record the personalized prompts associated with the communication management options in response to the associated access codes.

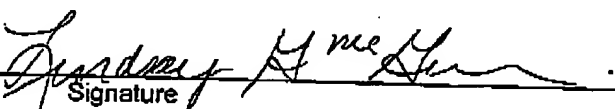
20. An apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the personalized server further includes:
an options help store adapted to store help information regarding the communication management options; and
a network interface for providing the help information to the users.

21. An apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the communication system comprises a PBX, the plurality of users being respectively associated with the plurality of office phones coupled to the PBX.

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